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THE
GRAND SECRET
Of Precipitating the
PRELIMINARIES

Brought to Light;

OR, A

VIEW of the MOTIVES

That Induced the

Courts of *L——n* and the *Hague*
to Overlook the visible ADVANTAGES of
continuing the WAR:

WITH

OBSERVATIONS on the probable Instability
of the Ensuing PEACE, on the Refined
Politics of *France*, in restoring her Conquests,
and on the Nature and Value of the parti-
cular DOWRY accruing to *Hanover* by the
Pacification.

In a LETTER from Amsterdam.

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Amsterdam, May $\frac{2}{7}$, 1748.

SIR,



BEFORE this can reach you, I doubt not but you will have heard that Preliminaries for a general Pacification, as they are call'd, were hatch'd at *Aix la Chapelle*, the last Day of the last Month. The Pangs of the negotiating Mountain are at last ceased, but whether your State Midwives will hastily produce the Offspring to the View of their Countrymen, is a Matter to be doubted: For I cannot persuade myself that your Ministry, any more than ours, do flatter themselves to have any Cause for exulting on the Occasion.

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casion. I don't think they will precipitate the Publication of this *Chef d'Ouvre* with as great *gaité de Coeur* as they did the Perfection of the Measure itself; therefore think myself obliged in Friendship, to exhibit this political Abortion to your View just in the Plight it was sent me from the Fountain-head, by one as incapable of misleading, as he is himself least liable of any Man living of being misled.

I don't know in what Light your Nation will take this hasty Step towards a general Peace; but if the present *English* be not better broke to the Yoke than their Ancestors, and less jealous and discerning than when last *France* obliged their Court, as she does at present, with a set of *Preliminaries*, I don't conceive that your People will exult any more than your Ministry, or than we *Dutchmen*, who love Peace in our Hearts for the sake of our Trade, but who would as unwillingly purchase it too dearly as buy Gold above its intrinsic Value.

As the Enemy was at our Door, or rather within it, we may be supposed to have sought Peace with the utmost Eagerneſſ

gerness ; but no mathematical Problem is more certain, than that the considerate among us dreaded nothing so much as *Peace*, because they perceived that the *present Men in Power* had courted it more arduously then was consistent with either the Dignity or Safety of the Republic, or with that general *Freedom*, which, 'till of late, had been the constant Object of the Attention of *Englishmen* and *Hollanders*.

You know not perhaps, that we *Dutchmen* can fall as naturally into *Airs of Grandeur* and *Sovereignty* as those born in Monarchies. But I can assure you, that any one of us can pronounce, *my Army, my People, and my Subjects*, with as great Facility and Air as any *Frenchman* or *Muscovite* in *Europe*. And what is no less true, the *Fashion* of assuming this Air of Sovereignty grew up, and spread in proportion to the Successes of the Arms of *France*. The first of this courtly *Fashion* appeared at the *Hague* as soon as *Bergen-op-Zoom* was taken, and increasing ever since, 'till the late investing *Maeſtricht*, it became conspicuous to the View of the lowest of our People, at the Setting out of the

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S—db—r to command the Army, which 'till then was thought to be that of the Republic.

'Tis well known that we are obliged to *France* for our new *General and Admiral*; but 'tis a doubt with me, whether it be as universally known, that *Peace* was thought necessary as for the Conversation of this high *State-officer* in his new Dignities, as war had been for his Elevation. Yet little as this Truth has spread, careful as our Statesmen are to conceal it, it begins not only to take Wind, but to be known that this single Circumstance, more than any other Consideration, has occasioned, that late *Precipitancy* of Conduct, of which your Nation and ours, and our *natural Ally*, have so great Reason to complain.

A *Court* has sprung up here of late among us, who held not this Emblem of Royalty in any very great Veneration. But a *Court* we have; nor need it be told you, who are no Stranger to the Drift of court Sycophants, that *Courts* have often *Objects* in view, that are less replete with the public than private Safety and Welfare. This is a Truth which most Nations

tions have experienced to their Cost, and of which, I fear, we *Dutchmen* shall have more early Experience, than was intended by the first Institution of our government.

The old Ministry here had necessarily laid the Root of their Influence too deeply to be wholly eradicated on the late *Revolution*. Men, whose Fathers, as well as themselves, had borne the chiefest Sway amongst us, must naturally have acquired an extended Friendship, and a Reputation, of which great Men know how to avail themselves on Occasion. The Conquests of *France*, after the Elevation of the *S——h——r*, furnished these men, and their Friends with a specious Pretext of crying down the late mobbish, undigested Step taken, or rather forced upon the Provinces. Nor was it difficult to pursuade a volatile Populace, frightened by the Approach of the Enemy, that they had not been gainers by the late *Change*, and that they might as well have trusted to the Guidance of their old Conducters as the *New*, who had not, till then, appeared to be better Patriots or more enlightened.

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The Truth is, our people, since the taking of their maiden Bulwark, were inclined rather to repent than exult. The loss of *Bergen-op-Zoom* seemed to have opened their Views, and wore away the Edge of their Prejudice to their old Governors. They now began to cool, and see Men, and Things by the Lights of Reason and Experience ; and this unprejudiced Reflection turned not so much to the Advantage of the *New* as *Old* Ministry.

The *new Men* were either too dim-sighted to see this early Change in the People, or too giddy with the Power they wrested from their Predecessors, to set a just Value on the Prejudices of those that had contributed to their Influence. They might think it, perhaps, derogatory their own Glory, and that, and the Dignity of their *Chief*, to court the Applause, or consult the Passions of the Populace, apprehending it might be a tacit Reflection on the Means by which the *late Change* had been wrought. There is nothing which Man cares less to own than the Obligation of an ill-gotten Power ; nor any thing he is more jealous of than its Preservation. And that

that all Power must be deemed ill-gotten which is not acquired constitutionally, is uncontrovertible. Nor is it less certain that our *new Men* were thrust upon the Republic in Opposition to its most stated and cherished Maxims and Resolutions.

'Tis true, that in the great Exigencies of the Commonwealth, as antiently in *Rome*, we had recourse to a *Superintendent* of the military Affairs of our Republic. We chose a *S—b—r* in 1672, and the Choice happily answered our Expectations; for the Person chosen was endowed with all the Qualifications requisite for extricating an oppress'd People out of their Difficulties. But, my Friend, your *William III.* and our late *S—b—r* is no more; and there remains none of his immediate Line to inherit his Fortune, his Wisdom, or his Virtues. Great as he was become by the additional Power of the *British* Crown, accustomed as he had been to the regal Stile, in your Island, he was too wise to use it on this Side of the Water. Here he was but a *Subject*, tho' with you he was a Sovereign. And he was so sensible of his Condition, that during his whole Life he never once at-

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tempted to arrogate *publickly* any pre-eminence that shewed an Inclination to Sovereignty. Such Words, as *my People*, *my Army*, or *my Subjects*, never escaped his cautious Lips ; not but that the *Army*, and even the *People*, were as much at his Devotion, as if he had been invested with the Sovereignty of the State. But he prudently took care that the great Influence he had acquired should always appear constitutional. Like other great Magistrates he awed and intimidated some, and corrupted others to his Purposes, in consequence of the Power he was invested with ; but never attempted to stretch his Power beyond the Limits perscribed by the Constitution.

You may judge of our late S——b——r's Conduct by that of the Princes succeeding his immediate Successor Queen *Anne*. The *Stuarts*, like *some* on this Side of the Water that shall be nameless, was ever laying hold of Opportunities to exercise and extend the Prerogatives of the Crown ; but your present royal Family take quite another and wiser Method. They sagaciously drop the Prerogative, I mean all Stretches of it, for the more solid and less inflaming *Influence* arising from Harmony

mony and good Correspondence with the *Keepers of the national Purse*. I need not tell you, who had so narrowly scrutinized into the *Walpolean* Administration, and so loudly inveigh'd against the immense Waste of it in the Article of *Secret Service*; you need not, I say, be informed by a *Dutchman*, how, and by what *Means*, this constant harmonious *Intelligence* subsists between the P——e and P——t.

But here with us, of late, the Politics of our Court was of a different Complexion. Our *new Men*, seeing they had risen to Power by *War*, imagin'd the best Support of their Influence would be the Continuance of the *Means* by which it had been acquired. Besides, *War* was ever thought to be the Harvest-season of Soldiers and Courtiers; and, among us, even of the *S—h—r* himself. The Civil Power being always eclipsed by the Military in Times of Confusion, it will be ever found, that those who are intoxicated with the Glare of Rule and Command, will not be the most forward to promote a Cessation of the Dangers or Convulsions of the State. And so it fell out in these Provinces, from the Eleva-

tion of a S—b—r to the investing of
Maestricht.

The pacific Offers of *France* were constantly rejected; nor did the shameful Loss of a Bulwark, thought impregnable, blunt the Edge of our Court-prejudice to Peace. And I must say, that the big Promises from your Side of the Water, contributed not a little to confirm our new Statesmen in their obstinacy. All the Continent was to be ransack'd for Troops, all the Seas were to be covered with Ships of War, and all the Purses of the *Republic* were to be emptied, in order to be revenged of *France*. This was the Pretence; but the true Reason for constantly throwing cold Water on the moderate Offers of the Enemy, was the Protraction of the War for the Enlargement of the Power of our *Jupiter* and his *Satellites*.

For had the Safety or Glory of the State been considered, Peace would have been accepted on the profer'd Conditions, or early Care would have been taken to be strong enough in the Field to turn the Current of the Success of the War against the Enemy. This later was practicable, —

ticable, or it was not. If practicable, why was not the glorious Scheme carried into Execution? and if not practicable, why were not the Offers of Peace embraced?

But the Truth seems to be, that Peace, of any Kind, would not answer the Purposes of our *new Court*, and a vigorous War might reduce the Enemy, already weigh'd down with the War, tho' successful on Land, to the Necessity of offering what Terms of Peace one would, such as our *new Masters* could not colourably reject.

If it had been intended to prosecute the War with Vigour, the *Russian* Troops, in your Pay and ours, would, and might have winter'd in *Germany*, and be early enough upon the *Maeze* to prevent the besieging *Maestricht*. Nay, an Augmentation of Troops might have been obtain'd of the Northern Empress, which additional Corps might be easily and speedily brought by Sea, in *April*, as soon as the Navigation of the *Baltic* is open. In short, if a vigorous War had been thought for the immediate Interest of our *new Men*, more vigorous and earlier

earlier Measures would have been taken. And since they were not, 'tis evident to a Demonstration, either, that our Statesmen are unequal to the Stations they fill, or that they would hold the Power they had grasp'd against the Grain of the best, wisest, and wealthiest of the People, at the Risque of endangering the very Being of the Republic. Let them chuse which Cap they will wear.

The *Selfishness* of our *new Men* appear'd at the very Dawn of their Power. For, instead of bending their Thoughts to avert the Storm from Abroad, they were employ'd chiefly in raising it at Home, and widening the Bottom of their Influence, by displacing the old Ministry and their Friends, rendering them obnoxious, and exposing them to the Fury of the Populace. Thus came the War to be neglected on this Side of the Water; and how the Statesmen on that Side came to concur in the *Neglect* shall be considered presently, tho' the Discussion seems more peculiarly the Province of an *Englishman*.

If *Dutchmen* be confidered as guided by Men whom a Populace had forced into Power,

Power, *Men*, driven uppermost by the Confusions of the Times, *Men* resolved to hold what they had seized; *Men*, in short, incapable of conducting War, and therefore wanting a Peace to preserve their Power: If I say, you consider *Hollanders* in that true Light in which they ought to be viewed, and in which I have endeavour'd to produce them for the better elucidating my Subject, you will be the less surprised at the *Precipitancy* of the present Measure, or the Facility with which your Statesmen have been able to lure our *governing Men* into their Scheme of a Peace on such Terms as could be obtain'd of the Enemy.

Need you, whose Family was conspicuous in the Opposition to the *Forgers* of the late *general Peace*, be told that the *governing Men* in a State are not always the wisest and most virtuous of the Community. Or, need you be told that Ministers, and even Princes, like other Men, have their Weakness, and their Passions, and above all others have no less the Maintenance of their Power in view, than likewise the Accumulation of Riches, and the Addition of new Honours and Dignities.

nities. Or need I further explain to you the Motives that might have urged our *Statesmen* to be more tractable at present, than your Court found them pending the Treaty of *Utrecht*.

In those happier Days, we had no Court; our *Statesmen* depended on the good Will of the People, and could have no Interest separate from theirs. In these, we have a new Set of Men instantaneously sprung up among us, who consider themselves more immediately dependant on an *Individual* than the Republic. Such Men, we may suppose, will consult the particular Interest of that *Individual*, an Interest they always look upon as blended with their own: Men, I say, thus dependent on a particular *Family* in the State, will be apt to examine only that Side of the Question which tends to the Promotion of the particular Interest in View.

While War answered the Purpose of this particular *Interest*, they were deaf to all *Overtures* of Peace. But finding the People, even those who had raised them, murmur at their Conduct, and as ready to pull them down as they had too hastily

stily push'd them up, it was judged necessary to prevent by Times another *Revolution*, which might prove as inauspicious to the *new Ministry* as the late had been to the old. Not that the People wanted or wish'd for Peace, while there was such a Prospect of humbling *France* by the Continuance of the War ; but, because they found the Error of thrusting those into Employments who were unequal to the Burden, and less attached to the public than private Interest.

Your Court oblig'd us into the Peace of *Utrecht*, and the Compulsion was general : It reach'd our Governors as well as our People. But at present the Scene is alter'd. You give us a Peace, and have the Concurrence of our *governing Men*, but not of the People, who see a Prospect of commanding Peace and humbling the perfidious Enemy, by continuing the War. Perhaps the Case may be similar with you ; your People, like ours, perceive somewhat too mysterious in the Conduct of your *Statesmen*, and may think the late Stride to Peace too hasty and precipitate. — But your *governing Men*, as well as ours, may see

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Things in a quite different Light from the rest of the Community, and may have their *particular Motives and Reasons* for the Singularity of their Opinions. For, I don't know how it comes, a Man seems to be new created when he commences *Minister*. These Servants of the Public seem a species quite different from other Men, or indeed, from themselves; I mean themselves, in their first State of Existence and Innocence. — Let us examine the probable Motives of their late Conduct.

I have stated the Case to you as it stood on this Side of the Water. Our *S——b——r* and his Creatures, saw a Storm gathering that threatn'd their Destruction. They saw, at last, such a Change in the People as foreboded no Good to the *new Men* and their late created Power. And they must be infatuated not apprehend the bursting of the gathering Clouds, should *France* push her Conquests nearer the Vitals of the Republic. The People, that is, the considerate Part of them, were under no such Dread for the Approach of the Enemy; well knowing the *French* must take Breath after the Reduction of *Mae-
stricht*,

strict, should they besiege it earlier than the Allies could form an Army of Opposition. In such Case, we know the *Russians* would be up with us, and all the Strength of the Empress-Queen; an accummulated Strength, which, considering the Difficulties of approaching this Province, would be more than sufficient to baffle the Enemy, and perhaps oblige him to retire.

Any Rub in the Way of *France* would answer the Purpose of the Allies. She was undone could her Carrier be stopt for a single Campaign: And there is not a Man of Sense in these Provinces that would not risque the withstanding her Efforts for the rest of the present. But such a wise and manly Steadiness would not answer the Purpose of our *new Men*, nor perhaps of your Court.

Let me suppose, and surely so reasonable a Supposition may be granted me, that Count *de Saxe* should be obliged to sit down contented with the Conquest of *Maestricht*, and the lesser Fortresses on the *Maeuse* before the Junction of the *Russians* and other Troops of the Allies. I believe it won't be dif-

puted with me, that he would not venture to push farther, or if he did, that he might well be check'd in such a Country as he must be obliged to pass through, and by an Army equal to his own, which it must be after his Losses before *Maestricht*, *Ruremonde*, and *Venlo*; or, if you will, *Bois le Duc*, and even *Breda*. As for any Attempts the *French* should make upon *Zealand*, and particularly the Isle of *Walcharen*, they neither would nor ought give a reasonable *Hollander* the least Concern.

Now, let us see how it would stand with *France* should she fail of forcing herself into this Province, as she certainly would for this Summer at least. With the united Naval Force of *England*, and this Republic, her Trade might be so ruined as even on a Peace, she should not be able to retrieve it in twenty Years, probably never. For, if her Sugar Colonies were once destroyed, and her *Canada* taken from her, I don't see a Chance for the Recovery of her Commerce. And we may observe, by the Successes of the *New Englandmen* and Admiral *Warren* at *Cape-Breton*, and of Admiral *Knowles*, lately at *St. Domingo*, how

how easily the *French* might be stript of all their Colonies in *America*.

In the *East-Indies*, there is scarce a Doubt that Admiral *Townshend* will have reduced all their Colonies, or *Pondicherry* the Chief of them. Their *Turkey* Trade is already pretty nigh stagnated, and might be wholly stopt so as to establish the Use of *English* and *Dutch* Commodities in that Part of *Afia*, in such a Manner that the *French* would find it extremely difficult hereafter to recover any great Share of that Trade.

By *England's* opening a Trade with *Spain*, which last sent Home to your Doors to sue for a separate Peace, the *French* Trade to that Monarchy must dwindle to nothing, especially as scarce a Ship with *French* Colours could escape your Cruisers and ours. And for the *Baltic* Trade, *France* could have no Chance of carrying it on while you and we rid Triumphant over all the Ocean.

Thus, you may see, how *France* might be distress'd, how she ought to be dealt with; and how soon she might be reduc'd to the Necessity of agreeing to

to such a Peace as might bid fair to last not only during your Days and mine, but those of the youngest of our People. We shall consider in the Sequel, how unlikely it is, that any Peace built on our late precipitated *Preliminaries* can be of this durable Consistency.

But, besides this obvious Destruction of the Trade of the Enemy which was in our Power by the Continuance of the War, there was a moral Certainty that such a *Tumour* was gathering in the Bowels of *France*, as might, if artfully nurs'd up, endanger her very Existence, I mean in her present State of absolute and abject Subjection to the Will of an *Individual*. It is well known that the Murmurs of the *French* were general and loud. They are of late become as *Free-Thinkers* in religious Matters, as you in *England* or we in *Holland*; and if well managed, and *touch'd* properly by your and our *Statesmen*, might be soon brought to wish to be eased as well of the *Papal* as *Regal* Yoke. I could say much more of this Topic. I could say what I know to be a Truth as clear as Day, that such ill Blood was gathering in *France* as made the *French Cour-tiers*

tiers shudder and tremble for the Consequences.

What do you think induced *France* to make you and us so frequent, and seemingly resign'd offers of Peace? Do you think the *French* Court is become less designing, less ambitious than heretofore? Not at all. But all the Cabinet of *Versailles* perceived a *Grangreen* in the Body Politic; saw *Spain* ready to prostrate herself before you since the Death of *Philip V.* knew it to be in your Power to stript *France* of, or ruin all her Colonies; perceived you of late taking the right Steps to dam up all the Channels of her Trade, and consequently of her Riches; saw us *Dutch* rouz'd and ready to corporate with you in the Destruction of her Commerce, were apprehensive the Circles of the *Empire* might be wrought upon against the next Campaign, to join their Head in putting a Stop to her unjust, injurious Treatment of the House of *Austria*, and this Republic; saw his *Prussian* Majesty wavering, and not exempt from Jealousy of the ambitious Views of the *French* Court. In short, Sir, *France* had her Reasons, cogent Reasons for appearing

appearing so passive and tractable as your Court and ours are of late willing to believe her to be. She was on the very Verge of Ruin, which, in in all human Probability nothing could prevent but this hasty, *selfish* Measure of your Statesmen and ours.

I have informed you with the State of Affairs here, and how necessary it was for our *new Men* that the *Sword*, by which they rose from the Level, should be turn'd into a *Plough-share*. Our *new Sages* were frighted out of their Wits at the Approach of the *French*, and call to you as loudly as they could, to save them by a Peace of any Complexion, for that certainly the War would soon reduce them to their Non-entity. For this Purpose was *Mynbeer B——k's* last Voyage to *London*. He implored, in the Name of his *M——r*, and of his *M——s* too, whose Petitions were moisten'd with *T——s*. It was represented, that as you begun the War, and particularly brought it home to *Holland*, in order to raise a *Son-in-Law* to the Power he enjoys at present, it would be impolitic, as well as unkind and unnatural, not to support him in the Possession of that Power.

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That your Court may always rely that that Power should be employ'd in the particular Service of the royal Family ; but that the Continuance of the War would probably occasion a second *Revolution* in the Provinces, which would certainly unhinge all that had been done in the last *Confusion*, in favour of the House of Freezland.

All was said, every thing was urged that could move you on that Side of the Water, and warn you from your Attachment to the Courts of *Vienna* and *Turin*, and particularly to the latter. It was foreseen that *France* must procure a Settlement for her Son-in-Law, and was obliged, in Honour as well as Interest, to re-instate the *Genoese* in the Territories wrested from them by the King of *Sardinia*. Our *new Men*, therefore, saw that no Peace could be obtain'd without your giving up those Points to *France* and *Spain*, which last you might have severed from the former, any Hour last Winter, if you had agreed to less for Don *Philip* than is now stipulated for him by the Preliminaries. And, really, Sir, of all the Slips of your Cabinet, since the Death of the Emperor *Charles VI.* your Neglect

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of *Spain*, in this Instance, is the least pardonable.

The Death of *Philip* open'd such a Door to your entering into the Views of the new Court of *Spain*, as must sensibly have affected *France*, and greatly promoted your own commercial Interest, if your Statesmen had not been most shamefully wanting in their Duty to their Country. *Ferdinand* and his Ministers are truly *Spaniards*, and as such attach'd solely to the true Interest of *Spain*; an Interest which was, and will always be, compatible with that of *England*. You had nothing more to do but to indulge *Spain* with a very moderate Provision for her *Infant*, which the new King might think himself obliged in honour to procure for him, and settle the Affair of Trade on the footing of old Treaties. This, I dare say, would bring that Crown to grow cool upon *France*, and think her Interest better blended with the maritime Powers.

But supposing *Spain* went farther, and expected to sell her Friendship to you at a higher Price; that is, suppose she insisted on the Restitution of *Gibraltar*: Would

Would that Fortress, become more burdensom than useful to *England*, be an Equivalent for the Friendship and Trade of that rich, indolent, lazy Nation ? Might not your Ministers have procured some lucrative, commercial Advantage from *Spain*, in exchange for a Place of small Utility in War time, and of none in times of Peace ?

For my own Part, I have often wondered at the Tenaciousness of your Nation, in regard to *Gibraltar*. What Charms are there in the Place that should so unmeaningly have intoxicated a whole trading People ? The Town produces nothing, contributes to no Trade that may not be carried on if there had been no such Bay or Fortress in the World ; and, besides, creates an Expence which, let me say, *England*, opulent as ~~she~~ may be thought, is ill able to bear.

'Tts evident, that if you had not had *Gibraltar*, you would not have had the late or present War with *Spain* ; nor is it less manifest, that while you retain that Place, you never can stand thoroughly fair with the *Spaniards*. But don't you observe, on the Face of those very *Pre-*

liminaries, those Suger-plums, which *France* knows so well how to dispose of on occasion, that she would obstruct a right good Understanding 'twixt *England* and *Spain*? As well as she was adroit enough to persuade you into Concessions, in favour of *Don Philip* and the Republic of *Genoa*, against the Opinion and Grain of your principal M——r, who had, for some time past, taken the King of *Sardinia* under his aweful Protection; I say, and insist upon it, that as *France* was able to dictate on these Occasions, she might lure or threaten you to part with *Gibraltar*, if she had not thought it her Interest, that that Bone of Contention should remain to be gnaw'd alternately by both Nations.

See how far *France* extends her Scheme, how subtilly she spreads her Net, to take in your unfledg'd Statesmen, with regard to her Views of keeping *England* and *Spain* on bad Terms: This refined insidious Stroke of *French* Politics, will appear to you on casting your Eye on the *Ninth Article* of the Preliminaries, by which *France* not only admits of a pecuniary *Claim* to the Crown of *Spain*, by your Prince, as Elector of *Hanover*,

Hanover, but engages to use her good Offices to obtain Satisfaction of his *Catholic* Majesty for the same. I own I was amazed to see such an Article lugg'd into such a Basis as these Preliminaries for a general Peace, imagining that so trivial a Matter might better be discuss'd, and settled more privately and separately; but on reflection I began to be better reconciled to the Step, on the Part of the *British* Plenipotentiaries, and impute it to the Refinements of the *French* Cabinet.

France might imagine to have perceived, on many Occasions, that your M—s generally acted so as to consider and consult *certain Prejudices*, more than the true Interest of their Country. She might likewise think to perceive a Desire that the E—e should rank with other more powerful States, and be considered as a principal contracting State in general Treaties. Vanity is blended with human Nature, and the truly Great and Exalted are the least tinctured with it. But be that as it may, *France* inclined rather to *expose* than oblige, finding there was no bending your Court without the Weight of this important *Claim* should be granted to her, agreed to it in such a manner

a manner, as must cause the Derision of some, and the Dislike of others ; and above all, was pleased with an Opportunity of widening the Misintelligence between *Spain* and *Great Britain*.

'Tis pity this obsolete Claim was not set up by *Hanover*, at the time of the late *Convention* between the two Crowns. But I forget that the *regal* and *electoral* Interests are distinct and separate, in Money Matters especially. But what may you suppose the Value and Nature of this high Demand to be ? 'Tis a Claim as old as *Philip IV.* of *Spain*, arising from a *Subsidy* and *Pay* of a Body of Troops, hired to that Prince by the Duke of *Hanover*. And to consider the Scantiness of the Duke's Power and Dominions in those Days, you may be sure the Corps of Troops hired must have been very small, and the *Subsidy* and *Pay* very trivial. Yet by the Intrigues of *France*, or the Blunder or Adulation of your M—y, this poor, insignificant obsolete Demand is made an Article in a Preliminary for settling the Peace of *Europe*. The Demand is said to amount to *a hundred and twenty thousand Pistoles*, or about *100,000 l.* Sterling ; no trifling Sum you may

may be sure, in those early Days, or at any time in *Germany*. But I dare answer for the Gentleman at the Head of your T——y, that he could, and would have found a thousand Ways of gleaning, imperceptibly, such a Sum in the Harvest of a Session, rather than the Claim should stand where it does. But we are to suppose that *France* designs that not only the Principle, but accummulative Interest shall be demanded. And in such case the Claim will be of so great Importance, as will effectually answer the Views of that dangerous Court.

I am surprised your Sages had not perceived the Drift of *France*, in these Stretches of her Policy. She encourages and admits a Claim by *Hanover* on *Spain*, that ought to have been buried with the contracting Parties, and would remain with their Ashes probably, if your M——rs were not more intent to make court to —— than —— &c. or, if *France* had not a View to keeping the Sore open between your Crown and the *Spanijs*.— But to return to the Subject of Mynheer *B——k*'s late Errant to your Court.

That

That Favourite and Confident of the *S——b——r*, was the fittest Person that could be sent to quicken the Pace of your Court to pacisick Measures. He was in all the deep Secrets of this Cabinet, and was well related on your Side of the Water. If he be not a bright Genius, he does not want Sense, and is remarkable for keeping a Secret ; no trifling Qualification in a Courtier and Favourite. In short, he succeeded, but without derogating from his Merit as a Negociator ; I must add, that he owed his Success more to Fortune or Chance, than to Regard for the *S——b——r* or his *C——t*, to any Attachment to the Interests of *England*, or to his own personal Weight or Oratory.

About the time of his coming to your Court, there happened a Chain of concuring Incidents, which not a little contributed to promote the Measure he went thither to solicit. It was about this time that Lord *C——d* resigned ; and 'tis thought for not being able to persuade his Colleagues into pacific Measures. But whether that be the true Cause of that great Man's Disgust, or that he had *Slights* put upon him by an *Inferior* in Knowledge

Knowledge and Understanding, and an *Equal* only in Office, are Mysteries more within your Province to develope than mine.

However that be, it is certain that the retiring of that Nobleman from the Cabinet, sunk the Hearts of our *new Men* a full *Flemish Ell*: And we are grossly imposed on from your Island, if his Resignation had not occasion'd a *Tremor* in the *Individual*, who is supposed to have occasion'd the Resignation. All the frightful Images of an *Opposition* are said to have appear'd to him at the Instant he heard that the *Seals* were return'd. I won't say that a Perturbation of this kind is an Argument of Guilt, but neither can it be deem'd an Indication of Innocence or Courage.

Another Incident favourable to *Mynbeer B*—k's Negociation, was the Damp on public Credit, which happen'd at this Juncture, more from the *Imperfection* of the Scheme for raising the Supplies, than Diffidence or Deficiency of Specie to circulate the Paper Credit. 'Tis but the truly wise and great of Soul, who are ever incapable of Guilt, and seldom liable

ble to Error, that can see big and dangerous approaching Difficulties, with steadiness and unconcern. But little Genius's, particularly when conscious of an Unfitness and Unfaithfulness in the Discharge of public Duties, shrink at the View of the most distant Danger, which, to avoid, they frequently increase, by the very Means they take for warding off the seemingly impending Blow.

Lord C——d's Colleagues in the Administration were not, by Nature, fitted for the Conduct of a War, nor, by Inclination, Friends to its continuance. But knowing, by Experience, that their Power rested solely on the Basis of *Resignation*, they fell in with the *Prejudices* in favour of the War, resolved, however, to lay hold of the first fair Opportunity for removing such *Prejudices* by Argument, or by producing a Portrait of approaching Danger. With the Intelligent, *Prejudice* of any kind never bears sway; and it is more surely removed by alarming the *Fear*, than informing the Understanding of the Possess'd.

The Hour was now come for executing this last Part of the ministerial Plan.

'Twas

’Twas suggested that all was at stake on this side of the Sea ; that if the War continued, the *new Men* here, and their *Chief*, would inevitably be unsaddled ; that public Credit begun to slacken to such a degree, as endanger’d the very Frame of the Government : That no Money was to be raised among us *Dutchmen*, who begun to shut our Purses, the better to distress our *new Masters* ; and that the young royal *Leader*’s ill State of Health, would not permit him to execute the Trust repos’d in him, or bear the Fatigues of the Campaign.

Every Reason was urged but the *true one*, which was the *Resignation* that portended an *Opposition*, which could not so well be stem’d in Times of *Expence*, as when the public Occasions might better permit the applying the public Money to the particular *Purposes* of a Ministry.

These are the authentic Accounts we have received here of the late Measures of your Cabinet ; and thus you see how the particular Interests of *private Men*, both there and here, had operated towards *precipitating* the Work of Peace. The Continuance of the *War* was mani-

festly for the Interest of the Allies, and would naturally promote the common Cause. But *Peace* became the immediate Interest of our *new Court*, and of your governing M——rs: And when the Competition lies between the public and private *Interests*; the latter, we may be sure, will ever prevail, in proportion to the Growth of national Vice and Corruption.

'Tis not thought here, that the *Prejudice* I have mention'd; and which your M——rs found themselves under the Necessity of consulting and managing, was owing so much to an Attach for the Cause of general Liberty, as a Propensity to Arms, Encampments, and other Comcomitants of War. Perhaps there may have been likewise a View to the Aggrandizement of a certain patrimonial Dominion, which if it should fail of an Addition of Territory, could not of additional *Riches*, by the *Pay* of its native Troops. And I suppose it may be partly to compensate for a Loss, thus necessarily arising from Peace, that the Stale Claim to *Spain*, before mentioned, had been conjur'd up, as an Expedient to soften the *Loss* to be sustained by the Discontinuance of the War.

What

What Pity, my worthy Friend, that Servants of the Public should forget their Obligations to the Community. 'Tis a continual War-fare, in modern Times, between the People and their *Stewards*. Nor have we much less Reason for guarding against *Domestic* than Foreign Invaders of our natural Rights and Liberties. If the *French* have invaded our Possessions, our *new Men* at Home have been busy with our *Liberties*. The Invasion of the former was but to oblige us to a *Neutrality*, which it was our Interest to have agreed to when first required ; but that of the latter was to force us to a Surrender of all that is dear in Life. These last have succeeded for themselves, and for the *French* too. They have not only cloathed themselves with our *Liberties*, but obliged us to truckle to the Enemy at a Time that he lay almost panting for Breath.

Never was the Condition of *France* less promising, never her Affairs more perplex'd than when your Court and ours snapt at the Bait, and swallowed the Hook thrown out to them by the Gallic *Fox*, who, according to an ingenious

genious Author of yours, whose humorous and poignant Performance has been lately turn'd into our Language: I say, according to the CONGRESS OF THE BEASTS, *France* ends this War with a View of beginning another (a). " But " should not I succeed so as to dictate " all around me, and be able to keep " my Conquests, I shall end this *War* " soon, that I may the sooner begin " another, which I propose shall put me " in the full and quiet Possession of " of what I hold at present." I might fill my Paper with pertinent Quotations from this prophetic, witty *Drama*, which had not a little contributed to awaken our Lethargic *Dutchmen* from their golden Dreams of Happiness under the Conduct of a *S—db—r*, and his Favourites.

But as for the future Views of *France*, according to this Writer, on the *Netherlands*, who can doubt of them since she took early Care to dismantle most of the Fortresses that fall into her Hands? or, who shall be in Condition to obstruct such ambitious Views whenever she

(a) Page 46. Second Edit. of the *Congress of the Beasts*, &c.

shall

shall judge it proper to execute the big Design? By this hasty *Reprise* granted to her, by those who consulted less the public than private *Security*, *France* will have Leisure to bring Home her Treasures, extend her Trade, improve her Manufactures, rub off her Debts, and establish a *Marine*. And when she shall have perfected her domestic Scheme, who shall prevent her Conquest of the *Netherlands*? Not the present Allies whom this sudden pacific Measure has disjointed, nor any one of them singly, or combined with other Powers. Nothing less than an Invasion of our own immediate Territories, will be able to induce this Republic to arm for half a Century to come. The King of *Sardinia* will find himself so surrounded by Princes of the House of *Bourbon*, so intangled in their Toils, that it will be absolutely out of his Power to enter into any future Confederacy against them. And the Court of *Vienna* has suffered so sensibly by bending to the false Politics of your Cabinet, or indulging its *Prejudices*; and besides, has so much Reason to resent your late Inattention to either her Honour or Interest, that I doubt greatly

ly if the Empress-Queen will ever again receive your Subsidy to arm even in Defence of the *Austrian Netherlands*.

After all, why should she? She can have no Quarrel with *France* but must be relative to her Possession of those Provinces, nor with the younger branches of her House, but must relate to those small Possessions that remain to her in *Italy*. Small indeed will be her Portion of *Italy* after parting with the best of the *Milanese* to the House of *Savoy*, and *Parma*, *Placentia*, and *Guastalla* to that of *Bourbon*. The Dutchy of *Guastalla* is of far greater Importance than those, who dole away Countries for their own particular Safety, seem to understand. By giving it to the Infant of *Spain*, the Empress-Queen is quite shut out from passing the *Po*; besides, putting *Guastalla*, one of the strongest Fortresses in *Lombardy*, in the Hands of a Neighbour, who very probably will be a declared Enemy before it be many Years, if the Wisdom of the Empress does not prevent it by making the best Bargain she can with *Spain*, for such of her *Italian* Dominions as these Preliminaries

liminaries leave her, and with *France* for the *Netherlands*.

And could that heroick, abandon'd Princess, do a wiser Thing than Part, for immense Sums of Money, will Territories that will always cost her more to defend than they are worth, distant from the Center of her Power, and which must necessarily involve her in all the Wars which the different Branches of the House of *Bourbon* may think proper to kindle? Her Wisdom should lead her, now that her *Ally* has, by the Stroke of his Pen, left her but a Shadow in *Italy*, and that *France* has dismantled and impoverish'd the *Netherlands*, to confine herself to the Empire, where she will be the more revered for being able to contract her Power, by parting with the Territories that occasioned the Extension of her Force.

I cannot but admire at the Politics of your *English* Cabinet. You spent above thirty *Millions*, and run near as much in Debt to Support the House of *Austria*, and yet you leave it in much a worse Plight than you found it, and

G that

that too without Necessity. You forced the Queen of *Hungary* to cede all her Rights to the richest Province she had to an unrighteous Invader, for the Sake of paving your own *Way* to his Friendship: And see how his *P——n* Majesty has rewarded your meddling Generosity? You oblig'd her likewise to yield up to the King of *Sardinia*, by the Treaty of *Worms*, the best of her *Italian* Dominions; and to compleat the Scene, you now compel her to part to Don *Philip* all that remain'd to her in *Italy* of any Value or Consideration.—For Shame! Let not your Nominal *Whigs*, for they are no other who now assume the Name, rebuke the *Tories* with having abandon'd their Allies in 1712.

To view the late Couduct of your *English* Cabinet, with Regard to this Imperial Ally, in the most favour'd Light, it won't bear Examination. Was the Treaty of *Worms* to be annihilated as to every contracting Party to it, but the Empress-Queen? Was she, for whose Support you declared to unsheathe the Sword, be the only Victim of your *precipitate* Politics? Why shall the Treaty of *Worms* be binding in Favour of the House

House of Savoy, whom you took not up Arms to preserve, and at the Expence too of that of *Austria*, in whose Defence you armed, and be a dead Letter with regard to the latter?

By a secret Article in that Treaty, your Court stipulated, in the strongest Manner, to procure an Equivalent or Indemnification for *Silesia*, which was understood, by all the Contractors, to be *Naples* and *Sicily*. And it was in consequence of this Stipulation that Prince *Lobcowitz* lately attempted the Invasion of *Naples*. It was in consideration of this promised *Equivalent*, that the Empress Queen was prevailed on, by your Court, to make those large Concessions of Territory to his *Sardinian* Majesty, which he is to hold by these Preliminaries that are quite silent as to the *Equivalent* which your Cabinet had agreed to procure for the Court of *Vienna*. Where is the Justice of such a Procedure? Where is the Wisdom of enfeebling, on every side, that Power for which you drain'd your Coffers; that only Power, which, if supported, might be hereafter a principal Instrument to shorten the Pace of *France* to universal Sway? In-

deed, my Friend, I blush for your Conduct in regard to a magnanimous Princess, who might have made good Bargains for her Family, if she could have gain'd upon herself to consider the Interest of your *royal House*, as little as your M——y have lately consider'd hers.

There remains for me but to observe on the *Inability* or *Unwillingness* of your Country (*England*) to measure again Swords with *France*. Should she soon find herself in a Condition, she will be always in humour to seize on those Conquests she now offers to yield up by these Preliminaries. And as I could not put the Matter in so just and apt a Light as I find it, page 11 and 12, in the aforesaid Drama, the *Congress of the Beasts*, permit me to have recourse to that ingenious Writer's Expression on the Subject. I need not tell you that he makes an *Aff*, cover'd with a *Lion's Skin*, personate your Country, once favour'd above all others by Providence.—*France* personated by the subtillest of Beasts, the *Fox*, speaks.

“ *Fox*. (addressing himself to the *Leopard*, or *Spain*) Let us ruin his
“ federates

“ federates (the *Ass's*) by *Land*, and we
 “ shall have leisure enough to ~~undo~~ him
 “ afterwards on that *Element* which is
 “ as unsteady as himself.—The *Tigress*,
 “ (Queen of *Hungary*) and *Wolf*, (King
 “ of *Sardinia*) were no less impolitic in
 “ hugging him (the *Ass*) too closely, than
 “ he was in doling away his Substance
 “ upon them. They should have hus-
 “ banded his Strength, that another time
 “ he might stand in the Gap to stay the
 “ Progress of an Invader. But they
 “ have given him such a Surfeit of War
 “ on *dry Ground*, and of *Subsidies*, that
 “ that they may both, hereafter, go to
 “ the D—l, before he will stir a Foot
 “ to save either.”

If this be the Case with *England*, as I
 fear it is, and if there be any Resem-
 blance in the Portrait I have here drawn
 of the Empress Queen, the King of *Sar-
 dinia*, and this State, why should we
 wonder that *France* would give up her
 Conquests at present, which she may
 soon so easily recover and secure, without
 any Dread of seeing a Confederacy form'd
 that could wrest them from her?

At

At present, *France* saw her own Inability to keep those Conquests. She saw her Ruin inevitable, should she prolong the War for the Purpose. She saw all her Colonies, *East, West, and North*, on the Brink of being torn from her ; she saw the Industry of her People stagnated in every Branch, and her Commerce languishing, if not gasping. She perceiv'd a convulsive *Tumor* gathering in her Bowels ; and saw a *Famine* unavoidable, unless the Good-nature of *England* did prevent the Havock it must have made in a few Weeks. She saw likewise her Armies dwindling by her vague Conquests, and was sensible of her Inability to recruit them. And she saw it would be impossible for her to support the War another Year, if her Apprehensions, but too well grounded, should prove real.

In such a perplex'd Situation, who can admire the present seeming Self-denial of *France*? I rather wonder she did not bend the Knee for Peace as she did to Queen Ann, which she certainly would, before next Winter, if she had not perceived the sudden *Panic* of our *new Masters* here in these Provinces, and of your *Directors* in your insular Empire.—

Ah!

Ah ! my Friend ! see how that dangerous Neighbour has play'd upon our *Fears*, and how she is like to thrive by our *Folly*.—But has she not engaged, by the 9th Article of the Preliminaries, to *employ her good Offices to obtain from the King of Spain Satisfaction for a Sum of Money, which his Britannick Majesty, as Elector of Hanover, claims from his Catholick Majesty?*

I expected to have seen an Article for the Payment of the *Ninety five thousand Pounds* that was to have been paid by *Spain to England*, by the memorable *Convention of 1739*. or at least, that *France* would be so complaisant as to promise to employ her good Offices for you ; but it seems that more Deference was paid to the E——r than the K——g. Adieu, dear Sir, if you excuse the Prolixity of this Epistle you will greatly add to the Favours already conferr'd on,

Yours, &c.

Pg: a.

Postscript by the Translator.

The Set of Preliminaries mention'd in this Letter, being, with very little Variation, the same publish'd in the *London Evening Post*, and other News Papers, it was thought needless to swell this Work by subjoining them to it.

